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A New Year's Presents
from
S. P. Sunday School
Jan'y 1849

[Faint, illegible handwriting, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

July 21st 1880

21st July

1880

. ELLA HERBERT:

OR,

S E L F - D E N I A L .

BY A LADY.

^c
BOSTON:

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ELLA HERBERT: OR, SELF-DENIAL.

PART I.

‘Then said Jesus to his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.’

‘WILL you explain this command of Jesus, so that I may understand how to obey it, mamma? Did he mean that we ought to deny ourselves in everything? Miss Vaughan gave it to me, this morning, to remember and reflect upon during the week. “Try to obey this command of our Saviour, Ella,” she said, with her gentle and serious manner. And this I will try to do, mamma, with your help.’

‘My dear Ella, I will gladly assist you to become what your teacher hopes you may, —

a true and humble follower of our Great Teacher. I think that Jesus did not intend that we should deny, or oppose all the faculties that God has given us,—but that we should bring all our desires and passions under the control of those powers which we call reason and conscience. He says, “follow me.” Jesus is our perfect example. He used all the spiritual faculties which God gave him, (and the Holy Spirit was given unto him without measure,) for the improvement and happiness of mankind. Jesus did not oppose his reason and conscience. He allowed no selfish appetites or desires to usurp the Holy Spirit in his soul. He was tempted as we are, yet without sin. While in the wilderness, he fasted forty days and forty nights, and was afterward an hungered. Yet he resisted the temptation to use his miraculous power for his own relief, by converting stones into bread, thereby yielding to a distrust of the providence of that God who had so clearly manifested his love and

favor at the time of Christ's baptism. But Jesus did not refuse to partake of food when it was consistent with the will of his Father. Do you understand this interpretation of your verse, Ella?'

'Yes, mother, I do, — but a great many thoughts have come into my mind about self-denial, while you have been speaking. Do you think I shall be able to practice it? How can I deny myself?'

'Ask your own heart this question, my Ella, and I will talk with you again to-morrow about it.'

The next morning Ella entered the breakfast-room, at the summons of the bell.

'Good morning, mamma,' she said, smiling, and looking herself as bright and fresh as the morning.

'Good morning, Ella,' returned her mother, 'you look as if you had taken a walk this morning.'

Ella placed her finger on her lips, with a

glance; which said to her mother, 'do not ask me any questions.'

Her sign was observed; her mother said no more, satisfied to wait till Ella should be ready to communicate her secret.

The day passed. Ella went to school as usual, and performed all her accustomed duties with a cheerfulness and energy which seemed to her mother uncommon. After tea, Ella came into her mother's room.

'Now, mamma, may I talk with you about self-denial? I have brought my work, that I may not lose a moment.'

'I am glad you have come, Ella; I perceive you are happy to-night — which seems to say that you have been somewhat successful in your efforts at self-denial to-day. But what is this,' continued she, taking Ella's work, 'where did you get these wristbands, my daughter?'

'Oh! mamma, I will tell you about them. Last night I could not go to sleep, till I had thought of something I could do to-day to

overcome some temptation. At last I concluded that I would try to be more industrious than I have been, and not give up to that feeling of indolence that I have indulged so much. And then I remembered that Susan Brooke looked very ill and tired, last Saturday, because she has been hurried so much in her work, lately. So, this morning, as soon as the sun shone through my curtain, I roused myself, and dressed as quickly as I could, and set out for Mr. Brooke's. When I reached the house, I saw Susan sitting at the window, already, and looking very much surprised to see me there so early. 'Good morning, Susan,' said I, 'will you let me take some of your work to finish for you? I can do any plain sewing very well, mamma says, —and I want to help you this week, if I can.'

'Oh! Ella! how kind you are,' she said. 'I have some shirts to make for Mrs. Worthington's son, who is going away to school, next Tuesday, and I was very much afraid

that I could not get them all done for him, in time. But you will get too tired, I am afraid, Ella, you have so many lessons to study.'

'Oh! no! Susan,' I said, 'you will oblige me very much by giving me some work. I will take these wristbands to make, if you will trust me.'

'Let me see,' said Susan, 'I have six shirts to make, and then they are to be washed and ironed, and sent home on Monday night.'

'At last she agreed to let me take all the wristbands to make; and I am to send home a pair every night. To do this, you know, mamma, I shall be obliged to deny myself, when I feel indolent, and to give up my selfish pleasures. But this is just what I want to be able to do. Is it not what I ought to do, mother, that I may follow Jesus?'

'Yes, Ella, I think you rightly comprehend the meaning of the verse which Miss Vaughan gave you, and I earnestly hope you will be

able to obey this command of our blessed Teacher. Have you asked, in your prayers, for strength to do so? You may find that you need much, even to accomplish the work of charity which you have begun with so much zeal.'

'I shall not find this very hard to do,' said Ella. 'I am only afraid that I shall take so much pleasure in sewing, for Susan, that I shall have no need of self-denial. I have not forgotten my morning and evening prayers. Perhaps I shall find something to do that will require more strength, by and bye.'

Ella's wristbands were neatly stitched and finished, before sunset. She hastened to put on her bonnet and shawl, that she might carry them herself to Susan, whose warm thanks and praise were more than a sufficient reward for her diligence.

'How neatly you have made them!' said Susan, 'I am almost ready to sew them on the sleeves. But Ella, do not trouble your-

self to bring them; I will send Austin for them. Poor little fellow! He seems to have lost all his lively ways lately. He has grown more deaf than ever, and has no appetite. Nothing seems to interest him, except reading, and he cannot easily get books that are suited to his age.'

'You need not send Austin for the wristbands, for I like to bring them myself,' said Ella. 'I will lend Austin some of my books to-morrow.'

Ella's industry seemed to be greater than ever on Tuesday. But her thoughts were now more of Austin's deafness and pale looks than of the pleasure she should give Susan by her assistance. Her sympathies were awakened for the poor little boy, and she hoped to make him look brighter and happier, by the entertaining books she would carry him. Her work was completed even earlier than on Monday, and her industry won for her a smile of approval from her

mother, that made her heart overflow with happiness.

Ella's books were received by Austin with a glad eagerness, unlooked for by herself. Always supplied with interesting books, adapted to her capacity, she could not conceive of the delight which caused Austin's heart to fill with emotion as he ran to put his arms around Susan's neck, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, and he could hardly speak — 'Oh! sister! do tell Miss Ella how much I thank her, and how happy I am!'

Susan was moved by an outburst of feeling so unusual in the quiet boy, and kissing him and smoothing the dark locks over his pale forehead, she said, 'I will thank her for you, Austin, — she is very kind.'

Austin sat on the footstool at his sister's side, and opened the books which Ella had brought. He began to read one of them — it was the Crofton Boys.

'Oh! how I shall like to read this, Susan! Don't you think so? It is about boys like

me, — no, not very much like me, but about what I can understand.'

It was growing dark, and Ella knew she must go, though she longed to hear what Austin would say, as he read along.

'How glad I am that I carried them to him,' thought she, 'to make him so happy.'

Ella was no less industrious on Wednesday than on the preceding days. When her work was nearly finished, it began to rain. Her mother said she was afraid it would be too wet for her to go to Susan's.

'Oh! no! mother, the clouds are scattering, — and see, — the sun is coming out.'

'Well, my daughter, you may go — but put on your cloak and rubbers, and take an umbrella with you, — for you know how easily you take cold.'

Ella ran to get her cloak and umbrella, but forgot her rubbers, until she had opened the door to go out.

'Oh! I have forgotten my rubbers,' thought she, — 'I must go and get them. But mam-

ma is so careful, and my shoes are very thick, — if I have to run up stairs into my room after my rubbers, I shall not have a minute to stay with Susan; and I want to know so much what she is going to tell me about her plans. What could she mean!’ And without bestowing a second thought on her rubbers, she stepped out, and walked as fast as she could, till she reached Susan Brooke’s.

Susan was alone. ‘I sent Austin to bed to-night, before you came,’ said she, ‘for I have something to tell you about him. To-day he has been saying, very often, “how good Miss Ella was! Susan!” but poor fellow! he grows so pale, and cannot hear what I say, unless he is looking in my face, or sitting close by me. I am going to tell you, now, what I want to do for him. I want to earn as much as I can, till I have money enough to take him to B——, to Dr. W., who is so famous for curing deafness. I think I can save enough, with what I have

already, to go before long, if I can get sewing enough.'

'Oh! Susan! what a good plan it would be! I will help you as much as I can. May I tell my mother about it?'

'Oh! certainly! I should like to have her know about it, for then she can give me advice. But I do not want Austin to know anything of it, before the time comes.'

While Susan was talking to Ella, about Austin, she began to feel that her feet were damp. There was no time to dry them, though, for it was too late to wait any longer; so she said 'good night,' to Susan, and hastened home. She dried her feet thoroughly, but dared not tell her mother she had wet them, because she would be so anxious.

'She would not sleep at all, I am sure, if I should tell her. But it will not do me the least harm, I dare say. I have never been so well as I am now, since I had that lung-fever, last winter.'

But Ella was mistaken. She was feverish

and restless in the night, and in the morning found herself unable to stand long enough to dress. Her mother came up stairs to inquire if she were ill.

‘Ah! Ella! I feared you would take cold, last evening, — but so well protected as you were, I hoped you were strong enough to bear so slight an exposure.’

‘Dear mother, I disobeyed you. I did not wear my rubbers, as you desired me. Will you forgive me?’

‘Certainly, my child, I forgive you; but I must send for Dr. H., that he may throw off this attack, if possible.’

Ella saw her mother’s anxiety, and would gladly have removed it, but she knew her fears were just. She was silent, but her countenance indicated so much distress that her mother came and sat down by her bedside.

‘Do not be distressed, Ella; I think you will be well again in a few days. In the meantime compose yourself as much as pos-

sible, for any nervous excitement, you know, will promote the tendency to fever.'

'Mother! it is not so much the thought of being ill, that disturbs me, but that I should so quickly have forgotten my good resolutions about self-denial, that I could not even do as you desired me, by wearing my rubbers, last night. I knew it was wrong, too; and now I cannot work any more for Susan, till I am better. Oh! how I wish I had obeyed you, dear mother, and then I should not have been lying here. What will poor Susan think, when her wristbands do not come?'

'I will send word to her that you are ill, Ella, and then she will not think you have forgotten her.'

'Send my love to her, mother, if you please, and tell her I will work all the harder for her when I get well again.'

With this thought Ella comforted herself,—and with the hope that she should have more strength to deny herself in future

temptation. She remembered that her mother had asked her if she had prayed for the aid of her Heavenly Father. 'Ah! there I was wrong,' — thought she, — 'if I had, then I might have succeeded better. Our Father who art in Heaven, forgive me that I have been thoughtless and disobedient, — Oh! help me to serve thee more faithfully, and to follow Christ, our blessed Saviour, whom thou hast sent to teach thy will.'

When Ella's mother returned she found her quite cheerful and composed, though serious and thoughtful. When Dr. H. came, and said that with care and prudence she might be well in a few days, she felt quite relieved, and began to think about Susan Brooke's plans, trying to see if they could be improved, and how, and if there was anything that she could herself do, besides sewing for Susan. Then she thought she would tell her mother about it, for Susan had said that she would be glad of her advice; —

but she concluded not to say anything of it, until her mother should be more at leisure.

‘But how sorry I am that I cannot stitch wristbands for her this week. Oh! I hope I shall never disobey my mother again.’

On Saturday Ella was so much better that she asked her mother if she might have some work, — ‘Susan’s wristbands, if they were not finished, — or Susan would be obliged to set up the greater part of the night to get her shirts completed, and even then there would be no time to wash and iron them.’

‘Do not be distressed about that, Ella,’ said her mother, ‘I have already sent the wristbands, which I stitched for her myself. She will have no difficulty in getting her shirts ready for her employer at the appointed time.’

‘Dear mother,’ said Ella, with moistened eyes, ‘how kind you have been! I fear I shall never be able to repay you for doing so much for me. How shall I? I cannot even do what you tell me, — not even wear my

rubbers when you desire it, mamma,' — and she burst into tears.

'Do not be discouraged, Ella — you have often rewarded my anxiety and toil for you, by obedience and affection,' said her mother, 'and I doubt not, will, in future, gladden my heart by your improvement in well-doing. Strive to become a true and humble disciple of our Saviour, and you will be all that I can ask or even wish. Yes, Ella, I desire not that you should acquire riches or rank, I covet not beauty or talents for you — but I do fervently pray that you may obtain those treasures which are imperishable, and that wisdom which is "the pearl of great price." I cannot let you work to-day, Ella, but I will bring you something to read.'

'Thank you, mamma, that I shall like still better — now that I feel easy about Susan. But I dreamed, last night, about her, — and about her plan, which she said I might tell you, — and I thought it failed entirely, and she was sadly disappointed, and that I was

the cause of her distress. And when I awoke this morning, I thought of poor little Austin, — how ill he looked, and how he is growing more and more deaf every day. If you should see him, mamma, with his beautiful dark curls, and soft grey eyes that look so earnestly in your face when you are talking to him, you would be so sorry for him !’

‘But what is this plan of Susan’s? You have not told me of it,’ said Mrs. Herbert.

‘No, mamma, because you have been so busy.’ And Ella then related to her the whole conversation between herself and Susan, about Austin, — of Susan’s resolution to go to B., and all the arrangements which she intended to make. ‘Now, mother, if you will think about this plan, and see what improvement might be made, Susan will be very grateful. She said she wanted your advice.’

‘I will think of it, Ella, and do all I can for its success. I do not doubt that I can do something for her. I am intimately acquaint-

ed with the physician whom she proposes to consult. He is a most benevolent man and will exert his utmost skill. But, Ella, I do not think Austin can ever be cured of his deafness. His health may be improved, — and that will be worth much, — particularly to one who will be obliged to provide for his own wants, be they many or few. Susan will never let him suffer, so long as she has fingers to work with or eyes to see, — but he must, if possible, be taught some employment by which he may earn his own livelihood.'

'I cannot bear to think that he cannot be cured,' said Ella; 'how it would distress Susan, if she thought so.'

'It will be best for us not to be too sanguine about success,' said Mrs. Herbert, — 'especially for Susan, for then she would be overwhelmed by a failure.'

'It seems to me,' said Ella, 'that I could never be happy again, if Austin must be deaf all his life, — if he cannot hear at all, and at

least cannot speak to us. I am sure that Susan never will be.'

'Susan loves Austin with too devoted an affection not to suffer extremely at such a result of her plan, — but she has too deep a sense of the goodness and wisdom of God, to murmur at his will. We may deny ourselves, Ella, by yielding our own desires entirely and trustingly to the will of our Father in Heaven. Indeed, this kind of self-denial is the highest we can attain. It was this which enabled our Saviour to overcome all things — even death and the grave. Father, thy will not mine be done, was not only the prayer of his lips, but the ruling sentiment of his soul ; — that to which he yielded perfect obedience. Here is a tract on the Sunday-school, written by Dr. Channing. I have chosen some passages for you. In the meantime, I will go to Mr. Brooke's, for Susan must not be forgotten.'

Ella thanked her mother, took the tract,

and read the following selections which her mother had marked for her.

‘The child is dear to Him as the hero, as the philosopher, as the angel; for, in that child are the germs of an angel’s powers, and God has called him into being that he may become an angel.’ ‘All the powers which he is to put forth in life, all the powers which are to be unfolded in his endless being, are now wrapped up within him.’ ‘The child is not a piece of wax, to be moulded at another’s pleasure; not a stone, to be hewn passively into any shape which the caprice and interest of others may dictate; but a living, thinking being, made to act from principle in his own heart, to distinguish for himself between good and evil, between truth and falsehood, to form himself, to be in an important sense the author of his own character, the determiner of his own future being.’ ‘The great design of his being is, that he should act *from* himself and *on* himself. He can understand the perfection of his nature,

and is created that he may accomplish it from free choice, from a sense of duty, from his own deliberate purpose. The great end of religious instruction is not to stamp our minds irresistibly on the young, but to stir up their own ; not to make them see with our eyes, but to look enquiringly and steadily with their own ; not to give them a definite amount of knowledge, but to inspire a fervent love of truth ; not to form an outward regularity, but to touch inward springs ; not to burden the memory, but to quicken and strengthen the power of thought ; not to bend them by ineradicable prejudices to our particular sect or peculiar notions, but prepare them for impartial, conscientious judging of whatever subjects may, in the course of Providence, be offered to their decision ; not to impose religion upon them in the form of arbitrary rules which rest on no foundation but our word and will, but awaken the conscience, the moral discernment, so that they may discern and approve for themselves what is ever-

lastingly right and good ; not to tell them that God is good, but to help them to see and feel his love in all that he does within and around them ; not to tell them of the dignity of Christ, but to open their inward eye to the beauty and greatness of his character, and to enkindle aspirations after a kindred virtue.' ' Let him learn that he is not to live for himself ; that he has a heart to be given to God and to his fellow-creatures ; that he is to do the will of God, not in a mercenary spirit, but from gratitude, filial love, and from sincere delight in goodness ; that he is to prepare himself to toil and suffer for his race. The cross, that emblem of self-sacrifice, that highest form of an all-surrendering love, is to be set before him as the standard of his religion, the banner under which he is to live, and if God so require, to die.' ' Teach him that the sacrifice of self and will, of private interest and pleasure to others' rights and happiness, to the dictates of conscience, to the will of God, is the very essence of piety and

goodness, — that there is a pure, calm joy, an inward peace in surrendering everything to duty which can be found in no selfish success. Help them to sympathize with the toils, pains, sacrifices of the philanthropist, and inspire contempt of fear and peril in adhering to truth and God.'

When Ella had finished these passages, some of which she had read several times, that she might receive their full meaning, she laid the tract upon her table, intending to ask her mother to let her keep it with her own books, that she might often refer to it.

'How kind and thoughtful she is,' thought she, 'to bring this for me to read now, when I so much needed such instruction. I *will* try to act from principle, — I will give my heart to God. It is for this that my dear mother and teacher are so anxious, and they shall not labor in vain.'

Ella was occupied with reflections and resolutions like these until the time of her mother's return from her visit at Mr. Brooke's,

Mrs. Herbert gave an account of her conversation with Susan.

‘I warned her,’ she said, ‘not to be too sanguine of success, for I feared she might be disappointed in her hopes. I thought if they were checked now the shock would be less painful at the time of the trial. I advised her to pursue her plan, however, for none but a skilful physician could decide in such a case what might or might not be done. She has earned quite a sum of money to defray the expenses of the journey and medical advice. She has an aunt in the city, who has urged her to come and visit her, so that she will not be obliged to go to a boarding-house. I told her if she needed more money I would gladly assist her. I shall give her a letter of introduction to Dr. W., which I doubt not will insure her his immediate attention and interest. She thinks she shall be in readiness to go in a week from next Monday. She has her own and Austin’s clothes to put in order, after she has finished

her shirts, which are nearly done now, and will be completed by Monday night. Her father, she said, was at first unwilling that she should attempt to do anything for Austin's deafness. 'It could never be cured,' he said, 'and she would only spend her money for nothing.' But seeing her so much disappointed at his reply, he added, 'that he did not know but that she might as well go, after all, for she could see her aunt and the great city, and if nothing could be done for Austin, why then she *would'nt* spend *all* her money. So Susan,' said he, 'you have my consent to go, and do whatever you please, for I know you will do what's right.'

In a few days Ella was quite recovered. She returned to her usual employment, and went to school again. Whenever she could find time, she was doing something to help Susan; for whom she felt an increasing interest ever since she had first resolved to sew for her.

Susan was now very busy in making her

preparations for her journey. She had finished her shirts to the entire satisfaction of her employer, and had nearly completed the sewing necessary to repair her own and Austin's clothes.

Ella's thoughtful kindness had most unexpectedly and conveniently enlarged their scanty wardrobe; for Susan's impatience to possess the sum of money required for accomplishing her long-cherished purpose, had allowed her to make no purchases of clothing that were not urged upon her by necessity.

Austin looked, or Ella fancied so, much less pale and thin in the new jacket and trousers which she had given him. Certainly his cheeks looked brighter, and his eyes sparkled with pleasure at the gift.

On the morning of Susan's departure, Ella carried her a letter of introduction to Dr. W., from her mother.

'How much you have done for me,' said Susan, — 'I can never repay you and your

mother, for your kindness to me, — but I know you will be rewarded, — and that the pleasure you feel in being generous to others will make you happy. I shall never forget how much I owe you.'

'Do not think of that, Susan, — how I wish we could do more for you, — that we could restore your little brother to health, — but He who is wiser than we, will do what is best for him. Don't you believe so, Susan?'

'I do,' she answered, and at that instant the stage-coach appeared.

Ella bade her good bye, and wished her a pleasant journey.

When Ella reached home, she found her mother putting on her bonnet for a walk.

'I am going in your direction, Ella, and as it is about your school-time, we will walk together.'

Ella very gladly accepted her mother's invitation, and told her how grateful Susan was for what they had done, and how bright

and happy Austin looked in his new clothes. 'How I hope he will be cured,' added Ella. 'It would make Susan so joyful.'

'I doubt not she thinks it would be a blessing, beyond all others,' returned Mrs. Herbert, 'but if she feared that Austin might become a vicious man, she would desire the health of his soul, as a far greater one. We are constantly forgetting the health of the soul, in our anxieties for the frail covering which must soon perish. I do not deny that to preserve the physical health will aid us powerfully to attain the spiritual,—but I fear we too seldom value it chiefly as a means to that end. We think too little upon the great object of our present existence—the growth of the soul, by the constant sacrifice of our selfish desires and passions. I am glad, Ella, that you are gaining some knowledge and experience of this great truth. May you go on in the path you have chosen,—may you desire nothing so earnestly as to bear the cross of your

Saviour, — then you will not have heard in vain, — then death will be to you but an entrance into a higher life.'

'I do desire this, dear mother, but I see now that it is harder to follow Jesus than I thought, at first. But I will try not to be discouraged. I feel that I must pray for strength to resist temptation.'

As Ella said these words, she came to a turn in the street, where she was to leave her mother. She went on her way, with the happy expression that betokens a light conscience, resolving, this day, to do her whole duty, if she were obliged to struggle hard.

'It is my birth-day,' she suddenly remembered. 'To-day, I am thirteen years old.'

Ella's teacher, Mr. Bond, was now in ill health, and often exercised a severity towards his pupils which could be excused only in one whose bodily suffering produced a corresponding irritation of mind. On this day he was unusually harsh. Ella was very diligent. Her French lesson was the first to

be recited. Her translation was excellent, and won her teacher's approval, — but a few mistakes in her pronunciation caused him to speak impatiently to her, — as he had never done before. The tears started in her eyes, — they were not tears of anger, but of sorrow, — for her morning prayers and thoughts had subdued all selfish pride. For a moment, she felt as if she could not go on, — but the remembrance of her resolution gave her the power to conquer her weakness, and she finished her lesson with so much good humor, and such evident eagerness to do her best, that Mr. Bond could no longer resist a smile of pleasure at her success. Sometimes the ill-temper or envy of a companion for an instant ruffled her serenity, — but she mastered the anger which had almost overcome her, and answered with a mildness far more effectual in restoring peace, than the impatient words which almost rose to her lips.

At night, Ella reminded her mother that it was her birth-day.

‘I remembered it, my love,’ said Mrs. Herbert.

Ella spent a very happy evening in reading aloud to her mother, frequently pausing to listen to her remarks, and to ask any questions that might be suggested by her book. As she took her lamp, at an early hour, for rest, her mother returned her kiss with a smile of approving tenderness that more than rewarded her for the day’s self-denial.

As she entered her chamber she perceived a gold cross lying upon her Bible, with these words engraved upon it;—‘Take up thy cross, and follow me.’ She could not doubt that it was a gift from her mother. ‘Yes, my dear mother, this shall remind me of my duty. I will wear it, till self-denial has become easy,—till I have no longer any pleasure in selfishness.’

PART SECOND.

ELLA HERBERT: OR, SELF-DENIAL.

PART II.

Two years had passed since Susan Brooke's journey to B——. Austin's health had, at first, seemed to improve; but in a few months it was evident to all, even Susan herself, that he would never recover. He declined slowly, and almost imperceptibly, until his death — which was so peaceful, like an infant's sleep — that Susan's mourning heart was still, and could not murmur.

‘Ah! poor Susan! how sorrowful she is since Austin's death,’ said Ella to her mother. ‘Do you think she will ever be cheerful and happy again?’

‘I do hope and think,’ answered Mrs.

Herbert, 'that her pious and thoughtful mind will perceive, in this afflictive event, the wise and truly merciful hand of a Father "who chastiseth whom he loveth." Now, she can only feel the sadness of her bereavement,— she can only remember how much Austin loved her, and how much happiness his gentle and trusting heart had given her. But, by and bye, she will see how much suffering has been spared him, by being taken thus early from a world in which he was so unfitted to dwell, to that heavenly home, where all tears shall be wiped away from his eyes. Here, the self-denial which Jesus taught, demands that she should resist the spirit of repining and mourning, and acknowledge that the wisdom and the love of God are manifest, even in this fatal termination of all her long-cherished hopes. The same disease which caused Austin's deafness, caused also his death. And this I feared, when Susan was so anxious that Dr. W. should be consulted. I felt that she had

better do so, because she would then have the consciousness of having done all in her power to restore him, — and it would be a consolation to her, in the event of his death. Do you not perceive, in Susan's case, the true office of self-denial? It is not to harden the affections, or to destroy the sympathies, but to raise them to their Divine source, — to purify them from the love of self.'

'I do,' said Ella. 'It is very difficult to attain. I shall often be discouraged, but I feel sure, that in this way only can I follow Jesus, who suffered no love of self to turn him away from the love of God and man. I *feel* that this is true, dear mother, and that we should not be required to be so self-denying, if we were not able.'

'If you are convinced that you need to make such an effort, Ella, and that you must not suffer yourself to be overcome by discouragements, you have already made some progress in this work. This is to become

changed from the animal to the spiritual life. This is to be "born again."

A few days after this conversation Ella saw Susan Brooke, even paler and thinner than ever, — but a serene and almost happy expression told that her heart had at last found rest, in that "blessed peace, which Jesus giveth;" and Ella felt consoled for Austin's death. She still visited Susan constantly, encouraging and helping her in various ways. Thus she filled, in some degree, the void made in Susan's affections, and sacrificed a more selfish enjoyment to the pure satisfaction of obeying the precept of Jesus, engraved upon the cross.

Mrs. Herbert rejoiced that Ella had strength to exercise this self-denial, for she trusted that she would be enabled to bear the afflictions and resist the temptations of her future life, with increased spiritual power.

The time had come when Ella was to need this strength, — for in a few months her father died, — leaving his family nearly des-

titute. Happily he died without this knowledge; for the knavery of a distant partner, in the same mercantile house, which caused its failure, was not discovered until after his death.

Upon Ella, as the eldest child, were new and more active duties to devolve. To be a comfort to her mother, and a guide to her young brother and sisters, was to be more than ever the object and endeavor of her life. She must strive to devote her faculties to the welfare of those around her—to their true welfare—for Ella had learned that the outward prosperity of life is of far less value than the inward and spiritual,—that the treasures of earth will not compare with the imperishable treasures of heaven. Thus, though so suddenly deprived of the luxuries she had been accustomed to, she tried to value them according to their true worth, and to remember that she had still inestimable blessings to fill her heart with deep gratitude.

It was necessary to think of some plan for

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future subsistence. And Mrs. H., being a woman of good education and talents, proposed to her friends who had formerly sent away their daughters to be educated, and who wished to assist her in her misfortunes, that she should give them instruction, and thus support her family, without being dependent on the generosity of others.

This proposal was very favorably received by Mrs. Herbert's best friends, who were very glad to give her a large salary, in return for devoting her time and faculties to the improvement of their children. Ella was delighted with it, too. She begged her mother to let her relieve her, as much as possible, of her household cares. To this Mrs. Herbert gladly agreed, on condition that she should devote a certain portion of her time to the cultivation of her own mind.

Ella perceived that some of her friends looked coldly upon her since the change in her situation from wealth to poverty,—but there were others who seemed to love her

more than ever. Among the latter was Alice Hervey. Alice was an orphan, adopted by a maiden aunt, who, though poor herself, had made every exertion to give Alice a good education. To do this, she had been obliged to live with the least possible expense, — to dress in the plainest clothing and deny herself many little luxuries that she might otherwise have indulged in. But she was so fond of Alice, and took so much pride in her good scholarship, that she cared little for this. She was ambitious that Alice should outstrip all her companions at school, and that she should qualify herself to become a teacher.

It was not difficult for Alice to be, as her aunt so much wished, a fine scholar, and the best in school; but there was evidently danger that her close study would injure her health, which had never been robust, from her infancy. Alice said nothing of her growing less strong every day, but at last it became too apparent that she was ill, and

that something must be done, or she would be beyond the reach of medical aid.

The physician to whom her aunt applied for advice, said that if she could spend the next winter in a milder climate, she might be restored; but otherwise he feared she would never recover. At any rate, she must entirely give up study, and take all the exercise her strength would allow, in the open air.

Ella called to see her friend Alice, soon after she had heard the report of Dr. N.'s opinion. Alice had gone to her own room, to lie down, and Ella would not have her disturbed, but sat down to administer, if possible, some comfort to Miss Hervey, who seemed quite overcome by the shock she had so lately received.

'Let us hope,' said Ella, 'that with much care, she may still recover. By following Dr. N.'s advice, strictly, she may soon be well again.'

'Ah!' said Miss Hervey, with much

emotion, 'I cannot procure for her even the means of exercise which Dr. N. recommends. She cannot ride without a gentle horse, — I could not trust her with any but a tried and safe one, for she must ride alone. How thankfully would I send her to a warmer climate, even to part with her! But that is impossible! She must die! and I must be left alone, with none to love.'

Sobs interrupted her, and it was some time before she could control herself sufficiently to speak to Ella, in answer to her minute inquiries about Alice.

Ella went home with a saddened heart, — for she loved Alice as a sister.

Though Alice was a favorite with all her companions, she gave Ella her warmest friendship. This friendship was unchanged when Ella's days of affliction and poverty came, — when some who had before professed much, had withdrawn all sympathy.

It was not a rich and proud girl that Alice wished to make her friend. It was just such

an one as Ella. Firm friends they were, believing that nothing but death could separate them.

The tears were still flowing from Ella's eyes, as she entered her mother's room to seek for advice and comfort.

'Dear mother, cannot we do something for Alice?' And she told her all that Miss Hervey had said, — of Dr. N's opinion, and of Miss Hervey's distress. 'Oh! if we were rich, we could, perhaps, save Alice. And if you had your gentle Canter, that Mr. Worthington bought, Alice might ride every day! Oh! perhaps I might,' — she exclaimed, suddenly checking herself, whilst a happy smile dispelled the sadness of her face.

Mrs. Herbert asked no questions, choosing to trust Ella to her own judgment, and feeling certain that if she needed her assistance she would ask it.

Ella remained in deep thought for some moments, — at last she looked up, and said, 'Do you think, mother, that Mr. Worthington

would let Alice ride Canter, every day? We know that Canter is a gentle and easy horse, — has no bad habits, — and is the kindest creature!’

‘I am afraid it would do no good to ask him,’ said Mrs. Herbert, — ‘he is one of those selfish persons who are very willing to leave everybody to take care of themselves as they can, so they do not trouble them.’

‘But I would pay him for the horse,’ said Ella.

‘How can you my love? you have no money but the necessary allowance for your clothes, which you wear always of the least expensive kind.’

‘But, mother, I would wear the coarsest dress, to save Alice. How glad I should be, if she could be cured, to wear the most common clothes all the days of my life.’

‘You have my consent to do as you think best, and may you have success!’

Ella thanked her mother for trusting her in so important an affair as a negotiation with

Mr. Worthington for the use of Canter, every day, for Alice — and decided to go to him immediately, lest something might happen to prevent the success of her plan, if she delayed it.

In about two hours she returned, looking so happy, that Mrs. Herbert knew she had been successful. She was almost breathless, with walking so fast, in her eagerness to tell the good news.

‘I must tell the whole story, mother. In the first place, I inquired for Mrs. Worthington, who has been so good a friend to Susan Brooke — for I thought she must have a kind heart, and would use her influence in my behalf. I told her the object of my visit, and asked her if I could see Mr. Worthington for a few minutes.

“He is at the store, just now, Miss Herbert, but I will send John for him.”

‘The boy soon came back, saying that Mr. Worthington was very busy, but would come in as soon as he was at leisure.

• I waited nearly an hour for him, which I spent in talking with Mrs. Worthington, who felt quite interested in my account of Alice, and said she thought riding on horseback would be very beneficial to her,—it had done wonders for a friend of hers in ill health, and for others she had known.

‘ At last Mr. Worthington came in, with such a good-humored expression, as if things had gone right with him this morning, that I felt much more courage in making my request. I was prudent enough to say, at first, that we were so accustomed to Canter and knew him to be so gentle, that we should be glad to have him at a higher price than any other horse. I said this that he might know we were not trying to get something out of him. I said I felt that I was asking a great favor of him, and that I hoped he would excuse the liberty I had taken in coming to him on such an errand, — but that I knew of nothing else that would do Alice any good.

‘ “ Well, you are a good friend,” said he,

“and deserve to have Canter saddled and bridled and sent to Miss Alice, every day. It shall be done, Miss Ella, — good morning.” And taking his hat, he hurried back to his store.’

Ella had called to tell Miss Hervey what she had done, and that Alice must be ready for her ride the next morning at ten o’clock.

Ella resolved to do as she had said, — to dress in the plainest style, that she might save the money to pay for the use of Canter. Miss Hervey would have Dr. N.’s bill to pay, and perhaps — but Ella kept her thoughts to herself, for she would not raise too many hopes, even in her own heart, but would try to feel resigned to lose Alice if it must be so.

The plainness of Ella’s dress excited some remarks from her companions, who were pupils in Mrs. Herbert’s school, and some wonder was expressed that she cared so little how she looked, — she who had once worn clothes as expensive as their own. They

knew not the motive that would have consoled Ella for a far greater privation.

In a few weeks Alice was certainly better. Her pale cheeks had gained some color, her step was elastic, and her eyes sparkled with their former animation.

Miss Hervey began to feel somewhat encouraged. But the winter was coming, — the cold winds, — when she must be kept a prisoner in the house, and Ella shuddered to think of the change it might bring. She determined to look on the bright side, however, and, if possible, not to give up the hope of a milder climate for Alice.

Mrs. Clayton, an old friend of Mrs. Herbert's, was to sail for Cuba in a few weeks, where she intended to spend the winter with her children. One morning she called upon Mrs. Herbert. During the conversation, she mentioned her desire of taking with her a teacher for her two little girls, and inquired of Mrs. Herbert if she knew any suitable person for such a situation.

Mrs. Herbert was replying in the negative, when Ella, who had been quietly listening, interrupted her, — ‘Mother, would’nt Alice make an excellent teacher for Mrs. Clayton’s little girls? Is she too young?—she is sixteen.’ -

‘True, Ella, she is just the person for Mrs. Clayton, provided her youth be no objection.’

She then told Mrs. Clayton the story of Alice — of her ill health, and of Dr. N.’s advice that she should spend the winter at the South.

Mrs. Clayton was evidently very much interested, and said she would call on Alice in a few days.

In the meantime, Ella undertook to prepare Alice and her aunt for their visitor, who had been, as she told them, a friend of her mother’s for many years.

It was finally decided that Mrs. Clayton should take Alice as a teacher for her daughters, while in Cuba. Alice was to receive a generous salary, and to have all her

expenses paid. Her duties were to be made as light as possible, in consideration of her delicate health, — and Mrs. Clayton promised Miss Hervey that she would watch over her with a mother's care.

When Ella received Alice's first letter, which told her how much she had enjoyed her voyage, how much better and stronger she had grown, that Mrs. Clayton was so kind she could never be grateful enough to her, and that she already loved her little pupils, Helen and Susan, who were so full of life and joy, yet so gentle and obedient, that it was a pleasure to teach them, her happiness was great indeed. She read it to her mother, and hastened to Miss Hervey, who was made no less happy by such good news from her darling Alice.

They counted the weeks which must pass by before her return, and thought of many pleasant hours they might then enjoy together, listening to Alice relating her adventures and experiences in her entertaining

way, which would be so much better than even her letters.

Ella's heart was filled with gratitude to Him 'from whom cometh every good and perfect gift,' for what she had thus been able to accomplish by a little self-denial. She saw how much good a self-sacrificing man, woman, or even child, can do. She saw, with a clearer eye than ever before, what is the true mission of Christ's followers, — that they should imitate their Master who 'went about doing good.'

'Mother,' said Ella, one cold autumn evening, as they were seated by a cheerful fire in their quiet little parlor, 'I have felt so happy about Alice that I can hardly think of anything else. I am afraid I take a selfish pleasure in having been, myself, the cause of so much happiness to her and others. Is it not wrong? And how can I overcome it if it is wrong?'

'Reflect, my dear child, how much more good you might and ought to do, — and that all the moral power you are able to

exert, you have received from your Father in Heaven. If the motive of your self-denial is ever to gratify self-love, or to obtain the admiration and love of others, then it is no longer pure self-denial,—for it is mingled with selfishness,—it becomes self-righteousness, and is not accepted of God. It is a vain and not a true worship. Jesus says, “take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. And ye shall find rest unto your souls.” This is the only rest—that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.’

Ella sincerely desired to devote all her powers to her Creator. But she found many temptations to lead her astray from the ‘strait and narrow path.’ She had much selfishness to subdue in her heart,—and lately she felt conscious that she was growing proud. Not proud of her person or manners, of her mental gifts, or of the tasteful simplicity of her dress,—her piety and good sense preserved her from yielding to such idolatry as this,—

but she was in danger of becoming proud of her good works. She was conscious that she had set too high a value upon the outward morality she had practised, — that she needed to feel more humble, and more dependent on God. By more earnest prayer, and by studying more faithfully the character and precepts of Christ, she would endeavor to conquer this pride. At the same time she would practice a more active charity, and neglect no opportunity of ministering to the comfort and welfare of others.

‘Ella,’ said Mrs. Herbert, one morning, handing her an open letter, ‘here is a letter from aunt Howard — your father’s aunt — which relates chiefly to you ; read it my love.’

Ella took it eagerly, for she remembered her aunt Howard with much affection, though she was a mere child when she last saw her, in deep mourning for a daughter about her own age.

Mrs. Howard, suffering from ill-health and depression, begged Mrs. Herbert to let Ella

come to her for a visit in the winter. 'Her little pet, Ella,' as she called her, 'who had in childhood reminded her so strongly of her lost Mary.'

'How much I should like to see aunt Howard,' exclaimed Ella — 'she was so kind and affectionate to me when a little girl that I have the most delightful recollections of her visit here. She was very sad, I remember, and used to smile sweetly when she looked at me, — and tears would fill her eyes. But of course, mother, I cannot go and leave you alone this winter.'

'Why not?' returned her mother, smiling, 'does your vanity say that I cannot do without you for a few months?'

'Yes, mother,' answered Ella, kissing her affectionately, 'that I must not leave you, with so many cares, even to visit aunt Howard.'

'But, seriously, Ella, it is my wish that you should make this visit, and I have not decided thus without reflection. Remember,

that Anna is old enough to assist me now, and that Charles and Mary are needing my care less and less every day. My own health is better than formerly, so that in spite of what Miss Vanity says, there is no reasonable objection on my account. I have a very strong desire that you should become intimately acquainted with aunt Howard, for she is a woman of uncommonly fine character, of true benevolence, and a Christian. Left an heiress, while young, she devoted her time and fortune to doing good, refusing the most brilliant offers of marriage, till, at the age of thirty-five, she gave her hand to Mr. Howard, a gifted and most estimable man, without fortune, who died, as you remember, about two years ago.'

'Since you really think I had better accept aunt Howard's invitation, I will say nothing more against it. I only fear that you will find too much to do, in my absence.'

'I know I shall miss you very much, Ella, but two or three months are quickly gone,

and then you will be at home again, to welcome Alice on her return. So we will consider it decided that you go to aunt Howard, — at what time? — early in December. In just one month from this you must be ready for your journey, and I will write to aunt Howard to tell her that she may expect you.'

At the appointed time, Ella was in readiness for her winter's absence. She felt sad at the parting, but soon became cheerful as she journeyed on.

Late in the evening she arrived at Mrs. Howard's, where she met a kind reception from Mrs. Earle, the housekeeper, who made her as comfortable as possible, saying that Mrs. Howard regretted that she was herself unable to sit up late enough to welcome her.

Ella was so much fatigued that she gladly retired to the chamber which Mrs. Earle showed her as the one destined for her use. It was a large and commodious apartment, fitted up with everything that could contribute to her convenience or comfort. A book-

case was filled with a choice selection of volumes, among which she saw several books lately published, that she had felt some impatience to read.

‘Oh ! I must be happy here,’ thought she. ‘How kind and thoughtful my aunt Howard has been, to provide me with so many comforts and luxuries !’ And with a grateful heart for the care and mercy of our Father in Heaven, she lay her head on her pillow, and was soon fast asleep.

The next morning, Mrs. Howard having passed a restless night, sent Mrs. Earle to tell Ella that she would be very glad to see her in her own room. As Ella entered it she saw that her aunt had already risen, and was sitting in an easy-chair, in her dressing gown.

As she advanced, Mrs. Howard extended her hand, and gently drawing her towards her, tenderly kissed her, inquiring if she had recovered from the fatigue of her journey, —

if she had slept soundly, — and hoped her mother and the children were well.

‘Sit down my love, — it is very kind in your mother to let you come to me, — I should hardly have asked it if I had foreseen my present illness, — but it is best as it is, — and I hope you will make yourself very happy here, though it is winter, and the country is less pleasant than in the summer, when Hill-side is beautiful. You must feel perfectly at home, my dear Ella, and consider yourself mistress of your own time, — in short, you must let me treat you as if you were my daughter.’

As she said this, the same sad smile stole over her face, that Ella remembered in her childhood.

‘My Mary would have been just your age,’ said Mrs. Howard. ‘She was a lovely child, — in life and in death, — of her death I must tell you some day — but not now.’

Mrs. Howard’s physician had pronounced her case to be a disease of the heart, saying

that she might die suddenly, at any time, or she might live a few years longer — and that she must remain as free as possible from any violent emotion or exertion.

Ella spent a great deal of time in her aunt's room, in reading aloud, or in needlework, of which she had brought a large supply from home. Then she took a walk every day, at her aunt's earnest request, that her health might not suffer from such constant attendance upon herself.

Ella's time was thus most agreeably occupied. She had never enjoyed more in her life than while reading or talking to Mrs. Howard, who was not only a woman of fine intellectual powers and acquirements, — but she had travelled much in her youth, and possessed the rare faculty of relating the history of her own life, without wearying the patience or sympathy of her hearers. On the contrary, it seemed to Ella that a new world was opened to her, while listening to her aunt's animated relation of the scenes

and events of by-gone days. Frequently, she would speak of her lost husband and child, — as if looking forward, with the eye of faith, to the time when she should meet them in heaven. She dwelt not so much on the happiness of past years, spent with those she loved, as upon the future, made brighter by the hope of a reunion, without separation.

Ella gladly heard her speak of the duties and the trials, the temptations and the hopes of the Christian, and felt that it was, indeed, a wise decision of her mother that she should become acquainted with so true a follower of the Saviour.

The system of unwearied benevolence, which Mrs. Howard had pursued for many years, had produced the happiest results for many miles around. It was not an indiscriminate charity — bestowing time and money, without thought as to the spiritual wants of the needy.

As Mrs. Howard looked upon the interests of the soul as of far more importance than

those of its perishable covering, so her efforts were especially directed towards the intellectual and moral improvement of the young in her neighborhood. With this object in view, she had established schools, with judicious teachers, which were open to all. Those who were unable or unwilling to pay for the education of their children, were assisted from her own purse, — and she had kept such constant watchfulness, that scarce a single child was left to wander idle and neglected.

On Sundays it was her custom to gather around her all the children that were not in attendance upon some one of the Sunday-schools in the neighborhood — as for various reasons there were always found such — and to administer from her own lips, teachings so earnest, so mild and spiritual, that their little hearts were seldom left untouched.

Nor were Mrs. Howard's charities confined to the children. She visited the families of all, and always showed the deep interest she

felt in their true welfare. Her warm and compassionate heart beheld, in every human form, a brother or a sister. Was it strange, then, that her heart-felt sympathies seldom failed to produce a corresponding emotion in the hearts of even the most ignorant and depraved. Many were the blessings implored for her in the days of her bereavement, and now sickness had brought her near to the grave, tears filled the eyes of many who did not lightly weep, as they eagerly inquired for the health of one so much beloved.

Mrs. Howard often sent some kind message of inquiry or advice by Ella, who now seldom took her morning walk without first asking her aunt if she could give her some errand.

Mrs. Howard was evidently slowly sinking away : sometimes Ella almost feared to leave her at night, lest in the morning she should awaken to see no more the kind smile that always greeted her, and hear no more the gentle words of her whose voice spoke love.

One evening Ella was reading aloud to her aunt that beautiful Psalm, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.' The rays of the setting sun shone in a stream of golden light, at the foot of Mrs. Howard's couch. It soon departed, but its radiance was reflected in the most brilliant hues of crimson, purple, and gold, which tinged the light clouds that had gathered in the west.

'See, my dear aunt, what a beautiful sunset!' exclaimed Ella.

'Beautiful indeed!' replied Mrs. Howard, repeating the lines from Mrs. Hemans,

Sunbeam of summer, Oh! what is like thee?
One thing is like thee to mortals given, —
The faith touching all things with hues of heaven.

Ella had been lately reading these lines, and she had admired them,—but now they fell on her ear with a harmonious, holy beauty, she had never felt before.

'Ella,' said Mrs. Howard, 'I must soon part with you,—the time of your departure

is drawing near, and I cannot ask your mother to defer any longer your return. But you will not forget the many pleasant hours we have spent together. Listen, Ella, to the words of one whom you will soon see no more. Trust in God—in the promise which He has made to all who will come unto Him, and seek Him. Then, though you walk through the dark valley of the shadow of death, you will fear no evil. I know He will grant my prayer for you, my beloved child.'

Ella's heart was filled with emotion—she could only reply with tears. In a week she was to bid farewell to one she had known but a few short months, but how sorrowful the thought that the parting was to be forever.

When the day arrived, Ella's efforts at composure were utterly vain.

As Mrs. Howard pressed her to her bosom, she said, 'God will bless you, my daughter,

trust in Him, — we shall meet again to part no more.'

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'Joy! joy!' exclaimed little Charles Herbert, as the stage-coach drove up at his mother's door, 'sister Ella has come!' And he danced and jumped about with so much glee, that he knocked down the bridge that his sister Mary had just finished with her blocks.

'Oh! Charles! I would have shown it to Ella, and it would have pleased her so much!'

'Never mind,' cried Charles, 'here's Ella! I'm so glad to see her!'

'How much you have grown Charles,' said Ella, as she kissed him. 'Where is mother and Anna?'

Ella had much to relate to her mother, and also much to hear of what had passed at home during her absence.

'Alice is expected home in a few days,' said Mrs. Herbert. 'Her aunt has inquired several times when you were coming, and

hoping that you would be here to receive her.'

In a few days Alice did come!

Miss Hervey was almost beside herself with joy at the improvement she saw in Alice.

'She has grown tall, and looks in better health than she ever did in her life before,' said Miss Hervey, as she met Ella at the door.

The meeting of the friends was truly a happy one—and it was long before they could separate.

'Really, Alice, you look so well I should hardly have known you,' said Ella. 'How thankful I am!'

'Mrs. Clayton was so kind to me,' said Alice, 'she would never let me exert myself at all beyond my strength, and was as careful of me as if I had been a princess, or made of glass.'

'Ah!' exclaimed Ella, 'you are our own dear Alice, and that is far more!'

In a few months, Mrs. Herbert received

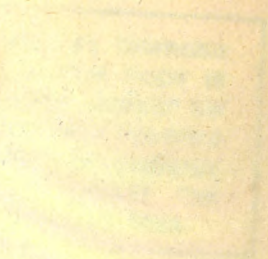
news of Mrs. Howard's death. Her physician, at her own request, wrote to inform her niece of this event. 'She died,' as he said, 'calmly and happily. I was called to attend her a few hours before her departure, and found her speaking words of consolation to those of her friends who had gathered around her bedside.'

Mrs. Howard had left many legacies to domestics, who had grown old in her household — whom she hoped would pass their declining years, free from care ; and to others, lame, blind, or diseased, whom she had cared and provided for.

To Mrs. Herbert and her children she gave Hill-side, the valuable estate which she had inherited from her father, and where she had always lived, a blessing to all around her. Thither Mrs. Herbert removed with her family, and in its lovely retirement she endeavored to educate her children to follow in the footsteps of her whose name was still loved and revered.

Ella sought to imitate the piety, the benevolence, the meekness and humility of her beloved and unforgotten friend, who had 'sat at the feet of Jesus,' and 'learned of him.'

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